(b) if so, on what basis the villages without drinking water were identified earlier and by what percentage the claim of having covered the villages under the drinking water scheme by the end of the Sixth Plan period had been reduced consequent to the re-assessment of the achievements;

(c) the percentage of the problem villages where source for water had been identified in the last three years stating the reasons for unsatisfactory progress, if any, in this regard; and

(d) the manner in which Government propose to cover the maximum number of problem villages under the drinking water scheme during the Seventh Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAMANAND YADAV): (a) and (b) At the beginning of the Sixth Plan (1-4-80) about 2.30 lakh problem villages remained to be provided with safe drinking water facilities. Out of these, 1.92 lakh problem villages were provided with at least one source of safe drinking water during the Sixth Plan. Thus about 38,000 spill over problem villages were left uncovered at the beginning of the Seventh Plan. Further, surveys conducted by States by 1-4-85, identified an additional 1.89 lakh villages as freshly identified problem villages, making a total of about 2.27 lakh problem villages remaining to be covered. The increase in the number of problem villages was due to drought resulting in failure of sources and contamination of existing sources. The following criteria have been adopted for identification of problem villages:

(i) Those which do not have an assured source of water within a distance of 1.6 Kms. or within a depth of 15 metres or at an elevation difference of more than 100 metres.

(ii) Those where the available water has salinity, iron flouride and other toxic elements.

(iii) Those where diseases like cholera, guinea-worm etc. are endemic.

(c) Out of 2.27 lakh problem villages which remained to be covered as on 1-4-85, the problem of source finding was for 68 per cent i.e., 1,54,300 problem villages. During 1985-86 and 1986-87 (upto Feb. 1987) source finding by providing safe drinking water facilities had been identified for about 58000 problem villages. It is expected to complete the source finding surveys in all the remaining villages by the end of September, 1989.

(d) It is proposed to cover the entire residual problem villages in the Seventh Plan, within the constraints of Plan outlay by using cost effective methods through application of relevant science and technology inputs in an integrated approach. The Technology Mission on Drinking Water in villages and Related Water Management had been launched to achieve these objectives.

Agitation by Farmers in Ahmedabad

2162. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware that some farmers had recently launched agitations in Ahmedabad demanding for more remunerative prices for their farm products and for reduction in electricity rates; and

(b) if so, whether the matter has been gone into and what steps have been taken to mitigate their hardships?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Agriculture being a State subject, the State Government of Gujarat are already seized of the matter and have taken a number of steps to redress some of the grievances of the farmers. The Government of Gujarat have also appointed a five-member Committee headed by the State Agriculture Minister for recommending further measures in the matter.